

AUGUST DATA

August began in a very unsettled vein with widespread shower activity with low pressure dominating both the country and much of the near Continent. The 1st was rather cool with a day maximum no higher than 18.8°C/65.8°F and no more than 24 minutes of sunshine for the day. Global radiation values had also fallen off sharply, the full week seeing nothing in excess of the 1 kilowatt per square metre mark and a black bulb maximum of 59.5°C/139.1°F achieved on the 2nd. The maximum global radiation recorded was 0.967 kilowatt per square metre on the 4th.

Maximum daily temperatures ranged from 24.2°C/75.6°F on the 6th to 18.8°C/65.8°F on the 1st whilst the lowest minimum for the week was 15.0°C/59.0°F on the 6th. The grass fell to 8.3°C/46.9°F on the 3rd whilst the solar radiation maximum was that recorded on the 2nd mentioned above. Rainfall was quite prevalent and totalled 30.4mm/1.20ins for the week with the highest fall being the 17.8mm/0.70in recorded on the 3rd. A maximum intensity of 125mm/4.92in per hour occurred during a thunderstorm at 18.24GMT on the 3rd. In all three thunderstorms occurred in what was a very unsettled and stormy week with just 31 hours of sunshine of which a maximum of 6.8 hours was recorded on August 2nd.

Winds were very variable and mainly light, a maximum gust of 27 knots/32mph being recorded on the 4th. The synoptic situation was dominated by low pressure with frontal systems regularly crossing the country. Mean sea level pressure varied from 1019.6hPa on the 7th to 1010.9 hPa on the 2nd.

The second week promised more "summery" conditions with more in the way of sunshine, less rainfall and higher temperatures. Rain for the week totalled 14.3mm/0.56in of which 8.7mm/0.35in fell on the 8th. Further thunder occurred on the 9th though this was in no way severe. Over the same time-span sunshine totalled 28.2 hours with almost half of this, 10.8hrs, coming on the 12th. This was certainly not very summer-like to begin with. However, depressions tended to pass to the north west of the country and then into the Continent and this gave us better conditions from the 12th onwards as temperatures began to rise. Winds continued with a westerly component and the daytime maximum on the 12th rose to 22.0°C/71.6°F. The final two days of the week saw rising maxima with 24.0°C/75.2°F being attained on the 14th. Black bulb radiation temperatures peaked at 58.1°C/136.6°F on the 14th though, again, the global radiation maximum of 1.121 kilowatts per square metre was attained on the 11th. Nights remained warm, or even oppressive, with large amounts of cloud and humid air, the lowest grass temperature falling no lower than 10.0°C/50.0°F on the 13th.

Our Continental neighbours suffered quite atrocious conditions over the week with torrential rain in much of Central and Eastern Europe. Some countries saw several times their monthly rain falling in a few hours inundating both the countryside and cities to depths not witnessed for over 500 years. Here conditions were good in comparison with a mainly westerly airflow gusting no higher than 22knots/26mph over the 7 days. The weather for the week had been more summer like in some ways, but it remained a long, long way from providing a settled spell of summery weather.

The third week of August proved a little more summer-like with high temperatures, low rainfall and ample sunshine. Air maxima ranged from 27.0°C/80.6°F on the 17th to 10.5°C/50.5°F on the 21st, the latter day also giving the lowest grass minimum of 7.5°C/45.5°F. Black bulb radiation temperatures peaked at 59.6°C/139.3°F on the 17th whilst the maximum global radiation reading topped 0.987 kilowatts per square metre on the 15th. In this area levels are unlikely to rise above the 1 kilowatt per square metre mark again this year with the sun's altitude declining quite rapidly at this time of the year.

Sunshine for the week totalled 53.2 hours of which a maximum of 12.2 hours was recorded on the 21st under practically cloudless skies all day. Rainfall for the same period reached only 0.6mm/.02in, all of this falling on the 18th. Winds were from a northerly or easterly quarter for most of the time and were light, the maximum gust of 21 knots/25mph recorded on the 17th. This more settled spell was brought about by high pressure from the Azores High, readings for the week angling from 1020.5hPa on the 21st to 1010.0hPa on the 18th. Soil and earth temperatures are by now quite high with the 100cm depth producing temperatures of around 15.0°C/59.0°F.

The fourth week saw relatively dry and sunny conditions with temperatures well up for August. The latter ranged from a maximum of 23.4°C/74.1°F on the 28th to 8.5°C/47.3°F on the 22nd. Sunshine totalled 36.1 hours, quite unspectacular for a holiday week, with the best day August 27th producing 10.7 hours of this. Against this just 0.6mm/0.02in of rain fell on one day, the 24th. Solar radiation temperatures are now declining appreciably and peaked at 58.0°C/136.4°F on August 22nd. Global radiation peaked at 0.956 kilowatts per square metre on the 25th, no value by now breaching the 1-kilowatt per square metre mark.

Winds were predominantly north easterly and light peaking at 18-knots/26 mph on the 26th. Wind direction is governed by the position of pressure centres, this week having lows over the Mediterranean and the North Atlantic. During the week pressure ranged from 1020.0hPa on the 23rd to 1027.1hPa on the 25th giving a pleasant late August Bank Holiday for a change!

The final few days of the month were pleasantly warm and sunny with maxima in the middle 20's Celsius/70's Fahrenheit. The 31st produced over 8 hours of bright sunshine bringing the months total to 162.6 hours [over 5 hours daily] which was appreciably down on the 30-year mean. As the month drew to a close high pressure over the country brought in a north westerly airflow and with it, much fresher air with grass temperatures overnight on the 31st/1st falling to 1.7°C/35.1°F.